DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 424 454 CE 077 463

TITLE	The Machinery of Management: Communication I (MM1). Workforce 2000 Partnership.
INSTITUTION	Enterprise State Junior Coll., AL.; MacArthur State Technical Coll., Opp, AL.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Vocational and Adult Education (ED), Washington, DC. National Workplace Literacy Program.
PUB DATE	1997-00-00
NOTE	67p.; For other "Workforce 2000 Partnership" guides, see ED 414 598, ED 414 612, and CE 077 461-488. Southeast Alabama Adult Network and Laurens County Literacy Council are also education partners in the Workforce 2000 Partnership. Industry partners are: CMI Industries, Inc., Opp & Micolas Mills, Pridecraft Enterprises, and Shaw Industries.
AVAILABLE FROM	Enterprise State Junior College, P.O. Box 1300, Enterprise, AL 36331; Web site: http://www.esjc.cc.al.us
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Behavioral Objectives; Communication Skills; Curriculum Guides; Employer Employee Relationship; Instructional Materials; *Interpersonal Communication; *Interpersonal Competence; Job Skills; Job Training; Learning Activities; Learning Modules; Listening Skills; Literacy Education; Manufacturing; Manufacturing Industry; Pretests Posttests; Production Technicians; *Verbal Communication; *Workplace Literacy
IDENTIFIERS	*Textile Industry

ABSTRACT

This curriculum package on communications, the machinery of management for new hires, has been developed by the Workforce 2000 Partnership, a network of industries and educational institutions that provides training in communication, computation, and creative thinking to employees and supervisors in textile, apparel, and carpet industries at 15 plants in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. The curriculum guide provides a quick view of all major curriculum components: job title for which the curriculum was developed; general instructional objective; overall time; and the chart which is used by reading across the columns to match the specific instructional objective with the estimated amount of time required, learning activities, resources required, and evaluation method. A closure activity reviews and assesses skills learned and may identify needs for further learning. The lesson plan explains the activities in detail. Handouts, transparencies, and pre- and posttest are provided. This module is designed to teach employees to use communication skills. Objectives include the following: initiate action in response to supervisor, instructor, or customer requests; interpret task-related communications, such as following, clarifying, or giving feedback to oral instructions; use English acceptable with supervisors, peers, and clients; engage in appropriate social interaction with supervisors, peers, and clients; use appropriate nonverbal communication; and organize information into an oral report. (YLB)

ED 424 454

Workforce 2000 Partnership

The Machinery of Management: Communication I (MM1)

EDUCATION PARTNERS	INDUSTRY PARTNERS
Enterprise State Junior College	CMI Industries, Inc.
MacArthur State Technical College	Opp & Micolas Mills
Southeast Alabama Adult Network	Pridecraft Enterprises
Laurens County Literacy Council	Shaw Industries

The Workforce 2000 Partnership combines the resources of educational and industrial partners to provide education and training in communication, computation and critical thinking skill to employees in the apparel, carpet and textile industries. The project is funded by a US Department of Education National Workplace Literacy Program grant awarded over three years to Enterprise State Junior College in the amount of $2,243,470 (70%) with committed private sector matching funds of $961,487 (30%), bringing the total program resources to $3,204,957. The activities of the Partnership do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. Participation by the education or industrial partners in the project should also not be construed as endorsement by the Government of any partners' products.

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INTRODUCTION

The Workforce 2000 Partnership is a network of industries and educational institutions that provides training in communication, computation, and creative thinking to employees in the textile, apparel, and carpet industries. The Partnership serves line employees and first-line supervisors at 15 plants in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. The curricula for these topics is developed by the educational partners, which include a junior college, a technical college, and two adult education/literacy programs.

The Partnership uses functional context curricula to teach the topics listed above. This introduction will describe how the curriculum is developed, the contents of this curriculum package, and how to involve learners in the educational process.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Before writing curriculum, instructors must know what employees need to learn. An instructional need is defined as the difference between what workers know and what the job requires. Project staff employ a variety of methods to analyze the duties and tasks of the jobs, as well as what kinds of communication, computation, and creative thinking skills are required. The analyses include interviewing exemplary workers; observing these workers on the job; interviewing groups of workers who perform the same or very similar jobs; reviewing documents such as job descriptions, handbooks, signs, memoranda, etc; interviewing supervisors and managers; and structuring surveys to be completed by workers, supervisors, and managers. During the analyses, the curriculum developer will also look for skills that the worker must perform to be considered for promotions.

Needs assessment is a vital part of the curriculum development process because the educator must fully understand what a worker does in order to determine what the worker must learn. As the needs assessment process continues, the educator also collects numerous documents to use as materials for instruction. The use of work-specific materials for instruction is what sets workplace education apart from other types of adult education. These materials allow skills to be learned in the classroom and more readily transferred to the plant floor. Therefore, reading skills improvement takes place as the worker is reading and comprehending the employee handbook; math skills improvement happens while the worker is computing percentages for production; and thinking skills improve as the worker is learning to work as a team member.

CONTENTS OF THIS CURRICULUM PACKAGE

The Curriculum Guide

The curriculum guide provides a quick view of all the major components of the curriculum. The job title for which the curriculum was originally developed and field tested is given in the upper left hand corner under the name of the curriculum module. Next is the General

Instructional Objective that defines the major purpose of the curriculum. The Overall Time is listed to estimate the amount of time that should be devoted to the entire module.

The chart is used by reading across the columns to match the Specific Instructional Objective with the estimated amount of time required, the Learning Activities, Resources required for the activities, and the Evaluation method used to assess achievement of the specific objective. The instructor should carefully review the column on Resources / Materials to ensure that necessary items are readily available. Copyrighted materials may be referenced in the Resources section of the Curriculum Guide; however, no copyrighted material has been duplicated and placed in this module.

Sequencing Learning Activities

Project staff use a model of instructional sequencing adapted from *Literacy at Work* by Jori Phillipi[1]. In this model, the instructional sequence begins with an activity designed to invite the learners into the learning process. This activity will allow the learners to bring to mind past learning and experiences in a way that will facilitate the learning of new information. The activity may come from the workplace or from other real-life situations.

Once the new information has been presented, learners participate in activities designed to practice skills clustered in increasingly larger chunks. These skills are then applied to situations from the workplace to maximize the transfer of the skills learned. A closure activity provides for review and assessment of the skills learned and may also identify needs for further learning.

Lesson Plan

The Lesson Plan contains the detailed explanation of the activities referenced on the Curriculum Guide. Note that the numbering system for the activities is the same on the Curriculum Guide and in the Lesson Plan. In reviewing the Lesson Plan, the instructor should look for places where more appropriate work-specific items can be substituted. This substitution customizes the curriculum for the specific work site and makes the learning activities more meaningful for the learners involved.

Handouts, Transparencies and Tests

The Lesson Plan may require that handouts and/or transparencies be used in teaching the module. If so, these items are located behind the Lesson Plan in the curriculum package and are designated as Handouts or Transparencies in the header at the top of the page. If a pre- and post-test (called Preview and Review) are a part of the module, these will also be found in the Handouts section.

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[1] Phillipi, Jori. *Literacy at Work: The Workbook for Program Directors*. New York: Simon & Schuster Workplace Resources, 1991.

It is essential to provide opportunities for the adult learners to recognize their place in the educational process. The first step in the process is the assessment of the learner's skills and needs, performed jointly by the learner and the instructor. This assessment becomes a part of the learner's Individual Education Plan (IEP). The IEP forms used by the Partnership are contained in this module. The IEP provides for collection of demographic data, evaluation of learner's skills and needs, and an outline of the activities in this module.

Every activity contains opportunities for evaluation, and, as much as possible, the learners perform the evaluation themselves. As curriculum is written, a page is developed for the learners to use to follow the sequence of activities and to document their performance. This page, called the Learner's Page, becomes a part of the IEP.

Frequently, pre- and post-tests (referred to as Previews and Reviews) are administered as a part of the evaluation process. Learners participate in scoring these tests and write their scores on their pages. To vary the assessment methods, the learners may be asked to rate themselves on their ability to perform certain skills, to write a phrase or statement that expresses their belief about their learning, or to specify what skills need more practice.

The purpose for including the learners in the evaluation process is to help them understand that assessment is reflective, constructive, and self-regulated. The learners, having participated in an ongoing needs assessment process, understand why they are participating in the learning activities. Therefore, including them in the evaluation of the learning gives them opportunities for relearning, synthesizing, and applying the skills.

Written self-evaluative comments on the Learner's Page also provide opportunities for communication between the learner and the instructor. This type of assessment is teacher-mediated (*i.e.* usually done when instructed by the teacher), ongoing, and cumulative. The Learner's Page is filed in his or her folder which is regularly reviewed by the instructor. During the reviews, the instructor may write comments in response to those made by the learner.

The goal of this curriculum is to enable learners to transfer classroom academic learning to the plant floor, thereby improving both productivity and efficiency. This curriculum will be most effective if the instructor customizes the curriculum to the specific worksite.

For more information about the project or the curricula contact:

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Module: Communications I -- The Machinery of Management **Author:** Susan Stagliano
Job Title: New Hires

General Instructional Objective: Utilize Communication Skills
Overall Time: 4 hrs. 25 min.

Specific Instructional Objective	**Time**	**Learning Activities**	**Resources/Materials**	**Evaluation (Process/Status)**
(Preview)	10 min	**1.1 Motivational Activity** Administer Preview	Preview	Completion of Preview
V. 900 Initiate action in response to requests from the supervisor, instructor, or customer.	5 min	**1.2 Motivational Activity** Ask students to perform weight distribution activity. Then discuss how poor communication can set people up for failure.	"Weight Distribution Activity" - Handout	Inability to complete activity

Specific Instructional Objective	Time	Learning Activities	Resources/Materials	Evaluation (Process/Status)
V. 300 Interpret task related communications such as follo·ving, clarifying, giving or providing feedback to oral instructions. **V. 700** Utilize English that is acceptable with supervisors, peers and clients. **V. 800** Engage in appropriate social interaction with supervisors, peers and clients **V. 500** Use appropriate non-verbal communication.	20 min	**2.1 Instructional Activity** Teach students the communication process, types of communication, and tools of communication. Define clarification and feedback, and explain to students the difference between the two.	"The Communication Process" - Handout	Observation Student Response
V.300 **V.700** **V.800** **V.500**	25 min	**2.2 Instructional Activity** Teach students about the difficulties in the communication process, including: perception, language, listening, and speaking.	"Difficulties in Communication" - Handout Understanding Human Communication. By Ronald B. Adler and George Rodman, Publishing Company. p. 79-80.	Observation Student Response

Specific Instructional Objective	Time	Learning Activities	Resources/Materials	Evaluation (Process/Status)
V. 300 **V. 700** **V. 800**	15 min	**3.1 Instructional Activity** Conduct "Let's Play Gossip" game with students. Upon completion, conduct a guided discussion on the need for clarification and feedback.	"Let's Play Gossip" - Handout	Observation Student Response
V. 300 **V. 400** **V. 700** **V. 800**	25 min	**4.1 Instructional Activity** • Teach students how to use the Empathy/Understanding Scale. • Show students an illustration of the scale. • Have students complete practice empathy ratings. Compare with expert ratings upon completion.	"Training in Perceived Feelings" - Handout "Illustration of Empathy Scale" - Handout "Responding with Empathy: Practice Rating" - Handout	Observation Student Response/Ratings
V. 700 **V. 800**	15 min	**5.1 Instructional Activity** Administer stress test to students. Upon completion, guide an open discussion on how empathy, perceptions and stress can affect communications.	"Stress Test" - Handout	Observation Student Response

Specific Instructional Objective	Time	Learning Activities	Resources/Materials	Evaluation (Process/Status)
V. 300 **V. 700** **V. 800** **V. 500**	35 min	**6.1 Instructional Activity** Teach students steps to becoming a better communicator, including: Listening skills, organizing a message, and speaking skills.	"Becoming a Better Communicator" - Handout Understanding Human Communication, by Ronald B. Adler and George Rodman Publishing Company, p. 79-80.	Observation
V. 700 **V. 800** **V. 900**	10 min	**7.1 Instructional Activity** Have students work tangoes logic game. Upon completion, allow students time to discuss frustrations, and how communications could alleviate some of these frustrations.	"Tangoes" Rex Games, Inc. 1642 Bush Street San Francisco, CA 94109-5308 (415) 931-8200	Observation Student Response
V. 300 **V. 700** **V. 800** **V. 600** Organize information into an oral report.	20 min	**8.1 Instructional Activity** Conduct drawing activity as an application of organizing a message. Upon completion, discuss students' methods and abilities to organize a message.	Drawings Paper Pencils	Observation Student Response and Interaction

Specific Instructional Objective	Time	Learning Activities	Resources/Materials	Evaluation (Process/Status)
V. 300	15 min	**9.1 Instructional Activity** Review "Becoming a Better Communicator." Next, teach students how communication can be used to solve problems. Then, show students how communicating to solve problems is accomplished (typically in groups).	"Communication as a Problem Solver" - Handout "As a Problem" - Handout Understanding Human Communication, by Ronald B. Adler and George Rodman Publishing Company, p. 221-223.	
V. 300 **V. 600** **V. 700** **V. 800**	30 min	**10.1 Instructional Activity** Conduct two-part role playing activity. Upon completion of each part, conduct a guided discussion based on the discussion questions included on "Role Playing Activity" - handout.	"Role Playing Activity" - Handout	Observation Student Response and Interaction
V. 300 **V. 700** **V. 800** (Closure)	40 min	**11.1 Closure Activity** • Instructor to guide an open discussion on communication in the workplace. See discussion on "Closure" - handout. • Administer Review	"Closure" - Handout	Observation Student Response

Lesson Plan

1.1 Motivational Activity - 15 minutes
Administer Preview - Allowing students 10 minutes to complete. Do not discuss answers.

1.2 Motivational Activity - 5 minutes
Handout - "Weight Distrubution Activity"
The purpose of this activity is to put the supervisor in the employee's shoes. By asking the students to perform an impossible task, as supervisors we set the student up for failure, as we will often inadvertently do to our employees. A supervisor will often set an unrealistic or even impossible deadline, will ask an employee to perform a task they are not capable of, or may not provide enough direction to adequately perform a task. Discuss with supervisors how often they may have inadvertently set up their employee's for failure. Be honest. This does not make you a bad person.

2.1 Instructional Activity - 20 minutes

A. Inform students that often mistakes such as the ones above can be prevented by communicating with their employees, and by being open to communication from their employees.

B. Teach students about the communication process using handout, "The Communication Process." Involve students by asking them questions about communications (see questions on handout). Distribute the handout after lesson has been taught.

C. Define clarification and feedback. Explain to students that clarification and feedback are two different things, and be sure students understand that difference.

2.2 Instructional Activity - 25 minutes

A. Instruct students on the difficulties in communication by listing the items that commonly interfere with communication, then go over each in detail.

B. Instruct students how perception can interfere with communication (use "Difficulties in Communication" handout). Draw the two words (Batman and Hero) on the board for students, making sure to draw the "A" in batman is not truly an "A," and the "H" in hero is not truly an "H." Explain to students that perceive the words to be batman and hero because of past experience. Read students the story of how perceptions may be damaging in the workplace. Inform students that there will be further instruction on perceptions later in the lesson.

C. Instruct students how language can interfere in the communication process (use "Difficulties in Communication" handout). Read the words listed on the handout one at a time and ask students for their definitions. Compare students defintions with dictionary definitions. Most personal definitions will contain not only a definition, but also an opinion. Explain to students that this is why meanings are in people, not in words; therefore, people's personal definitions of words can interfere with communications.

D. Instruct students how listening can interfere with communications (use "Difficulties in Communication" handout). List and define the four parts of the listening process. Ask students for suggestions on how each might interfere with the communication process. Guide and assist students when necessary, referring to the list on handout.

E. Instruct students how speaking can interfere with the communication process (use "Difficulties in Communication" handout). List the four parts of the speaking process. Ask students for suggestions on how each part might interfere with communications. Guide and assist students when necessary, referring to the list on handout.

3.1 Instructional Activity - 15 minutes

A. Play gossip game (see instructions on "Let's Play Gossip" handout). The purpose of the game is to show students how communication can break down when clarification and feedback are missing.

B. Some students may think this is an unrealistic exercise because they may feel there will not normally be 10-12 people involved in the communication process. List the possible chain of command in which a company order might be communicated (shown on "Let's Play Gossip" handout), and explain to students that it is definitely realistic for the communication process to involve many people.

4.1 Instructional Activity - 25 minutes

A. Instruct students on how to use an empathy scale to guide their responses when dealing with employees (use "Training in Perceived Feelings" handout). The Empathy/Understanding Scale uses a 4-point rating scale to gauge a response to an individual's problem. The chart on the handout shows the definitions for each rating (1.0 through 4.0), and gives a gray area for responses that might fall in-between two of the given definitions. The Key Word section on the chart simply gives an abbreviated definition which should be easier to remember. Give each student a copy of the scale and cover definitions in class.

B. "Illustration of Empathy Scale" handout gives an actual example of the empathy scale, and how a sample response would be rated. Give each student a copy of the empathy scale illustration, and have students role play the roles of the employee and the supervisor. Have students take turns, because the role of the employee will always be the same, but the response of the supervisor will change as the empathy/understanding level gets higher. Discuss with students why each response earns the rating that it does (reasons are listed on handout).

C. Give students a copy of the "Responding With Empathy: Practice Ratings" scale, and have them complete the scale. Upon completion, review the scale and the student responses, then tell students what the expert rating was for each response (see Expert Ratings, on handout).

5.1 Instructional Activity - 15 minutes

A. Administer the Stress Test to students (see "Stress Test" handout).

B. After the test, guide students in an open discussion on empathy, perceptions, and stress, and

how these can all affect communication. (See "Instructor Notes" after handout for suggested questions and discussion topics).

6.1 Instructional Activity - 35 minutes

A. Instruct students on methods for becoming a better communicator (see "Becoming a Better Communicator" handout).

B. Instruct students how to become a better listener (see "Becoming a Better Communicator" handout). Review the four parts of the listening process. Discuss listening as an active behavior rather than a passive one. Give examples of how an active listener behaves for each part of the listening process.

C. Instruct students how to organize a message (see "Becoming a Better Communicator" handout). Go through the 7 steps to organize a message using the example listed on handout.

D. Instruct students how to become a better speaker (See "Becoming a Better Communicator" handout). Review the four parts of the speaking process. Explain to students that while speaking is easily viewed as active, being active does not necessarily mean being involved. Go through each step and give students examples of how an involved speaker behaves throughout each part of the speaking process (see handout).

E. "Becoming a Better Communicator" handout may be used as a handout for students after the instructional lesson.

7.1 Instructional Activity - 10 minutes

A. Administer Tangoes activity (see "Tangoes" handout for instructions and purpose of the activity).

B. After the activity is completed, allow students to discuss their frustrations. Compare their frustrations to the frustrations their employees feel on the job. Ask students to name some ways that being a better communicator could alleviate some of their employees frustrations, which, in turn, would probably alleviate some of their own frustrations at dealing with these employees.

8.1 Instructional Activity - 20 minutes

A. Allow students to use the techniques for being a better communicator to complete the Drawing Activity (see "Drawing Activity" handout).

B. Explain the purpose of the activity to students (See "Drawing Activity" handout). Be sure to explain to students that good communication is important because it is often the role of the supervisor to communicate, NOT demonstrate, just as it was with this drawing activity. Use the following illustration to show how much time demonstrating can take:

-- A sewing supervisor has 35 people on her line
-- Each person needs 5 minutes for the supervisor to sit down at her machine and demonstrate a technique

-- The supervisor's total time conducting demonstrations is just shy of **3 HOURS!**
-- Ask students, can you really afford that 3 hours from each and every work day?
-- Also, the time calculated above does not take into consideration the time it took to walk between employees, nor does it allow extra time for a more difficult problem
-- Suggest to students that the next time a problem arises, they might ask themselves: "Do I really need to demonstrate this, or can I communicate it?"
-- Further, if the decision must be made to demonstrate, be sure to also communicate with the employee, allowing time for clarification and feedback. Making the time the first time will save time and mistakes at a later date.

9.1 Instructional Activity - 15 minutes

A. Review the tips to become a better communicator (see "Communication as a Problem Solver" handout).

B. Begin discussion on communication as a problem solver. First, explain to students that often less communication is better than more. Tell students the definition of insanity (see "Communication as a Problem Solver" handout). Go through the examples listed on handout to show students how more communication is not always better.

C. Explain to students that when communicating to solve a problem, this is usually done in groups. Give students examples of different types of groups, and how they function (see "Communication as a Problem Solver" handout). Define for students the difference between internal problems and external problems (see "Communication as a Problem Solver" handout).

D. Explain to students the guidelines, or "norms", which a group should follow when communicating to solve a problem (see "Communication as a Problem Solver" handout). Give students a copy of the "do's" and "don'ts"; chart for the proper use of norms when communicating in a group. The handout may be given to students.

10.1 Instructional Activity - 30 minutes

A. Conduct Role Playing activity with students (see directions on "Role Playing Activity" handout). Upon completion, discuss the communication techniques used. See handout for suggested discussion questions.

B. Allow students to use the norms chart from "Communication as a Problem Solver" handout and complete the attached widget activity in a group (see directions for the widget activity under Part II on "Role Playing Activity" handout). (Divide students into two groups, three groups for a large class. Ideal groups should have no more than 6 per group if possible). Upon completion, discuss each group's communication. (See "Role Playing Activity" handout for suggested discussion questions.)

11.1 Closure Activity - 25 minutes

A. Instructor to guide an open discussion on communication in the workplace. (See handout for suggested topics and questions for discussion.)

B. Administer Review Test.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Communication Preview/Review

_____ 1. What are the 3 steps in the communication process?
A. Message → Clarification → Feedback
B. Sender → Message → Receiver
C. Verbal → Nonverbal → Written
D. None of the above

_____ 2. Which of the following is an example of a tool of communication:
A. Telephone
B. Radio
C. Computer
D. All of the above

_____ 3. True or False: The sender and receiver of a message must always be people.
A. True
B. False

_____ 4. True or False: Clarification is the same as feedback.
A. True
B. False

_____ 5. Which of the following is NOT considered a difficulty in the communication process:
A. Perception
B. Language
C. Selective hearing
D. Focus

_____ 6. The 4 parts of the listening process are:
A. Hearing, Vocal, Remembering, Delivery
B. Delivery, Attending, Understanding, Topic
C. Understanding, Remembering, Decision-making, Speaking
D. Hearing, Attending, Understanding, Remembering

_____ 7. Which of the following would not be a technical difficulty when speaking:
A. An echo in the room
B. Static in the microphone
C. Loud machinery
D. A sore throat

_____ 8. Which of the following is a good example of an active listener:
A. Sits in the back of the room
B. Completes other work while listening
C. Asks questions at the end of the speech
D. Quickly forms an opinion

_____ 9. Which of the following is NOT one of the 4 parts of speaking:
A. Attending
B. Vocal
C. Topic
D. Delivery

____ 10. When organizing a message, you should always:
A. Consider the audience or the receiver
B. Quickly change topics to keep the audience interested

____ 11. Which of the following is NOT a quality of a good speaker:
A. Projects voice
B. Knows the topic
C. Uses appropriate hand gestures
D. Concentrates on only a few members of the audience

____ 12. Which of the following describes a Level 1.0 response on the empathy scale:
A. Listener's response is irrelevant, possibly damaging
B. Listener's response reflects surface feelings
C. Listener's response identifies underlying feelings
D. None of the above

____ 13. True or False: In order to achieve a Level 4.0 response on the empathy scale, the response must be validated.
A. True
B. False

____ 14. True or False: Meanings are in people, not in words.
A. True
B. False

____ 15. True or False: Empathy means to put yourself in someone else's shoes.
A. True
B. False

____ 16. True or False: More communication will always resolve the problem.
A. True
B. False

____ 17. True or False: Communicating to solve problems is typically done in groups.
A. True
B. False

____ 18. True or False: When communicating in groups, the group must follow established norms.
A. True
B. False

Name: _____

Date: _____

Communication Preview/Review
KEY

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- B. Delivery, Attending, Understanding, Topic
- C. Understanding, Remembering, Decision-making, Speaking
- **D. Hearing, Attending, Understanding, Remembering**

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B. False

Motivational Activity

Weight Distribution Activity

Directions: Instruct each student to find a place against the wall to stand. At the same time, they all must place the right sides of their bodies against the wall, hold their left arms by their sides, and then lift their left leg out to the side.

Notes: Students will not be able to perform this task. It is impossible to lift the left leg without falling down. As the instructor, you have given the students directions to an impossible task.

Ask the Students: "By giving instructions to an impossible task, as the instructor I set you up for failure. How many times in a supervisory position have you set your employees up for failure?"

The Communication Process

The communication process consists of 3 elements:

Sender → **Message** → **Receiver**

What would happen if one of these elements was missing?
Communication would not take place if one of the above elements was missing.

Must the Sender and the Receiver of the message always be communicating by talking?
No! There are different types of communication (listed below).

Must the Sender and the Receiver always be people?
No! The Sender and Receiver of a message could be any one of several tools of communication. (Listed below)

Types of Communication

Verbal: messages are expressed using language and sounds

Nonverbal: messages are expressed without the use of language; commonly known as "body language"

Written: messages are expressed using symbols

Tools of Communication

The following is a list of some of the tools of communication:

Telephone, Radio, TV, Computers, Newspapers, Fax Machine, Satellite, Answering Machine, Letters, etc.

Can you think of any more tools used to communicate?

Clarification and Feedback

Clarification is the process by which the receiver confirms the sender's message. It does not involve the receiver stating her opinion; it only involves the receiver repeating the message in her own words, thereby showing that she understands the sender's message.

Can the 3-step communication process be reversed? *Yes! Often times the receiver has an opinion to state. When the receiver states her opinion, it is called* ***feedback****, and then the process is reversed: the receiver becomes the sender and the sender becomes the listener or receiver.*

Difficulties in Communication

The following is a list of items that commonly interfere with the communication process:

Perception: the way each individual sees and interprets the world; people view the world in many different ways, depending on their experience

Language: meanings are in people, not in words, especially when people speak different languages; however, even in the same language, a single word might mean different things to different people depending upon how the word is sent and received.

Listening: receivers often have selective hearing -- they hear only what they want to and ignore the rest of the message; or, even though a receiver is listening, they do not understand, therefore the message is lost; or, outside distractions may interfere with the physical process of hearing

Speaking: speakers can often be difficult to listen to and understand for many reasons: 1) the speaker may be experiencing vocal problems (laryngitis, soft-spoken, etc.) 2) outside factors may interfere with the speaker's voice (faulty audio equipment, a loud air conditioner, a loud thunderstorm, etc.) 3) or the speaker may simply be boring and difficult to focus on.

Perception

Look at the two words below:

1. BHTMAN 2. HERO

In the first word, did you perceive the A was the letter A? But in the second word, did you perceive that the A was the letter H?

What made the difference in how you perceived the letter? Your past experiences in addition to the context of the surrounding words made the difference. For example, a foreign student may have perceived these words differently.

The following story is an example of how perceptions can be damaging to communication and damaging in the workplace:

> In one company, an office manager hired a new file clerk. The new worker was experienced and well-qualified. However, she was also tall, blonde, and very pretty. The other file clerks assumed that the office manager hired her because she was attractive. They avoided talking to her and acted unfriendly. Since they perceived her as a "dumb blond", they never got to know her. Such errors in perception unnecessarily damage communication between people.

Language

Meanings are in people, not in words. For example, look at the following list of words. Think of what each word means to you (more than just the definition, but rather how it makes you feel). Then, look up the words in the dictionary for the "proper" meaning.

Republican	Teen-ager
Liver	Ice cream

How close was your personal meaning to the dictionary meaning?
Did you find that your meaning contained not only your definition, but also your opinion?

With all the different meanings of words, its a miracle communication takes place at all. However, communication can be made easier by taking other people's opinions into consideration. By "stepping into someone else's shoes" you can better understand their point of view, thereby making communication better.

Listening

Although listening, or receiving, is a part of the communication process, listening may also be described as a process of its own. There are 4 main parts to the listening process:

1. Hearing -- the physical process of receiving the message
2. Attending -- focusing on what is being said
3. Understanding -- interpreting the message into one's own experiences
4. Remembering -- recalling the message at a later time

If any part of this process is missing, then listening does not take place, thereby interfering with the whole communication process.

1. Hearing -- background noise, such as loud machinery, or other factors such as partial deafness may actually interfere with the physical ability to hear.
2. Attending -- a listener may not choose to focus on the message, or another factor such as a severe headache may make it impossible to focus on the message
3. Understanding -- if the listener is not able to comprehend the message, then the meaning of the message is lost
4. Remembering -- if the listener is unable to recall the message, then they are not able to communicate the message to the next receiver, thereby ending the communication process

Speaking

There are many issues within an individual that can interfere with the communication process, such as perception and listening; however, sometimes the difficulty in the communication process simply lies within the other person, or the speaker. Try to remember the following difficulties associated with speaking so that you can try to avoid them yourself when the tables are turned, and you are the speaker.

1. Vocal -- this means that there is some difficulty with the speaker's voice, such as the speaker has laryngitis, possibly they have an unfamiliar accent, or maybe they are simply soft-spoken
2. Technical -- these type of difficulties are those beyond the speaker's control; they involve problems such as a bad loudspeaker system (microphone, amplifiers, etc.), an echo in the room, or any type of background noise
3. Topic -- the subject of the talk may simply not interest the audience, therefore they do not remain focused on the message
4. Delivery -- even at times when the topic is interesting, often times the speaker is not; a boring speaker can lose the audience's attention, thereby destroying the communication process

Review

The 4 main difficulties involved in the communication process are:
1. Perception 2. Language 3. Listening 4. Speaking

Let's Play Gossip

Purpose: This game is designed to show how communications can break down when clarification and feedback are missing. It may also practically demonstrate how the above points can and do interfere with communication.

Directions: Make sure students are seated in a line (such as seated around the table). Begin with one of the students on the end of the line. Have that student think up a saying or a phrase that contains several words (see examples below if the student cannot think of one). Have that student whisper the phrase to the next student, then have students continue to whisper the phrase in sequence until the last person receives the message. When the last person receives the message, have that student state the message aloud. Compare to see if that was indeed the original message. Because of difficulties in the communication process, the message will usually be altered during the course of being passed through all the students.

Rules:
1. The message must not be stated aloud until the last person has received it.
2. Students are allowed to tell the message only <u>one</u> time. (No repeating the message!)
3. The receiver is not allowed to ask questions or allowed to repeat the phrase to clarify with the speaker.

Summary: Since the end message is usually different from the original message, students are able to understand how the communication process can break down. Some students may think this is an unrealistic exercise, however, because they may feel that there will not normally be 8-10 people involved in the communication process. But, in large companies, often times more than 8-10 people are involved in sending a message. For example, a message may come from the President of the company regarding a new sewing procedure which the operators must learn. Here is the chain of people that message would probably travel before it actually got to the sewing machine operators:

President - Vice President - Plant Manager - Production Manager - Supervisors - Sewing Machine Operators

This chain of communication contains 6 people, plus there would probably be a few others (such as assistants or receptionists) along the way. So, the need to use clarification and feedback, especially in a large corporate situation, is imperative.

Sample Phrases:

- Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.
- Trouble is merely opportunity in work clothes.
- Consider the turtle: He only makes progress when he sticks his neck out.

Training in Perceived Feelings

Empathy/Understanding Scale

1.0	2.0	3.0	4.0
Response is not relevant and may be damaging to the person. Does not relate to the surface feelings expressed.	Response partially communicates an awareness of surface feelings of the person. If content is communicated accurately, the response level may be raised. If content is communicated inaccurately, the level of response may be lowered.	A response conveying that the person is understood at the level expressed. Surface feelings are accurately reflected. Content is not essential, but, when included, it must be accurate. If it is inaccurate, the level of response may be lowered.	A response conveying that the person is understood beyond the level of immediate awareness; underlying feelings are identified. Content is used to complement affect in adding deeper meaning. If content is inaccurate, the level of response may be lowered.
Key Words	**Key Words**	**Key Words**	**Key Words**
• Irrelevant • Possibly damaging	• Subtractive	• Surface feelings reflected	• Identifies underlying feelings • Additive • Goes beyond present awareness

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Illustration of Empathy Scale

Situation:

Employee to Supervisor: "The more I try to get along with the new lady on our mod, the more I feel that she just wants to be left alone."

Level 1.0 Response:

"If the handwriting is on the wall, why don't you just leave her alone. Don't butt in where you're not wanted."

This response is rated level one because it ignores surface feelings, it is criticizing, and although the helper might have the right idea, it is too early to present this to the helpee. Remember that there is not a strong base between the helper and helpee at this point.

Level 1.0 Response:

"Didn't she come here from Clinton Mills in Geneva?"

This response ignores the employee's feelings and is irrelevant. The response is not related to the stimulus statement in any significant way.

Level 2.0 Response:

"That's too bad."

This response is rated 2.0, subtractive, because it is only a partial awareness of the employee as a person. The response ignores most of what the employee says and sounds mechanical.

Level 3.0 Response:

"I guess it's kind of disappointing when you make an effort to be friendly and it's not accepted."

This response is rated 3.0 because:
- -- it includes communication of a primary surface feeling (disappointment)
- -- it includes the essence of the content
- -- it neither adds nor subtracts from the employee's statement

A level 3 response communicates to the employee that you heard what he/she said (content) and you are attempting to understand how he/she feels (affect).

In the early stages of the helping process the task is to establish a relationship and gather information. By doing this the helper and helpee (supervisor and employee) can make more realistic decisions later. The helper must earn the right to be judgmental.

Level 4.0 Response:

"It's upsetting not to be responded to positively. Although you are only referring to this one incident, it sounds like maybe you are questioning your ability in general to get along with people."

This response is rated level 4.0 because it goes beyond the present awareness, or at least the present verbalization of the helpee (employee).

In order to be rated a level 4.0, a helper response must be validated by the helpee (employee):

- Validated Answer from the helpee (employee):
  "I guess you're right. Lately I've been having problems with others."

  In this answer, the helper (supervisor) correctly judged the underlying problem, and this was confirmed, or validated, in the employee's answer.

If an answer is not validated, then the response level drops to 2.0:

- Invalid answer from the helpee (employee):

  "No, not at all. This is the first time anything like this has ever happened to me."

  In this answer, the helper (supervisor) incorrectly judged the underlying problem, and consequently, an attempt at a level 4.0 response has dropped to a level 2.0.

Responding With Empathy: Practice Ratings

Situation:

Receptionist to Floor Supervisor: "I really like my job here, and I like the people I work with, but I can't seem to please the office manager. The harder I work, it seems the more he expects me to do."

Rating	Response	Experts
	"I know how you feel. I've been living with that for six years!"	
	"You really are concerned about your job, but right now you're confused about just what to do to satisfy your manager."	
	"The thing to do is stand up to him. If you let him push you around now, things will never be any better."	
	"You like being here, but right now the situation is pretty discouraging for you."	
	"As a floor supervisor, I don't think it's my place to become involved with disputes at the clerical level."	
	"According to my friend who is a psychologist, our office manager's personality reflects a deep-seated feeling of inferiority. In order to keep himself feeling good, he has to put other people down and maintain tight control. You'll either learn to put up with his neurotic behavior or leave. It's as simple as that."	
	"Underneath your frustration I sense a great deal of anger. You're giving him 100 percent and instead of appreciating that he expects even more. That's pretty hard to take."	

Responding With Empathy: Expert Ratings

Rating	Response	Experts
	"I know how you feel. I've been living with that for six years!"	2.0
	"You really are concerned about your job, but right now you're confused about just what to do to satisfy your manager."	3.0
	"The thing to do is stand up to him. If you let him push you around now, things will never be any better."	1.0
	"You like being here, but right now the situation is pretty discouraging for you."	3.0
	"As a floor supervisor, I don't think it's my place to become involved with disputes at the clerical level."	1.0
	"According to my friend who is a psychologist, our office manager's personality reflects a deep-seated feeling of inferiority. In order to keep himself feeling good, he has to put other people down and maintain tight control. You'll either learn to put up with his neurotic behavior or leave. It's as simple as that."	1.0
	"Underneath your frustration I sense a great deal of anger. You're giving him 100 percent and instead of appreciating that he expects even more. That's pretty hard to take."	4.0

Stress Test

The life change events listed in the attached chart come from a Social Readjustment Rating Scale developed by psychologists Holmes and Rahe. All these life events, good and bad, exact a penalty in the form of stress. And, depending on how much stress you encounter, your health could be affected. The test has been used to predict and prevent physical problems that can result from too much change (stress) in your life.

As you read through the chart, think of what has happened to you in the past year. Record the point values for events that apply to you in the right-hand column, then add up your total score. If your total for the year is under 150, then you probably won't have any adverse reaction. A score of 150-199 indicates a "mild" problem, with a 37% chance you'll feel the impact of stress with physical symptoms. From 200-299 you have a "moderate" problem with a 51% chance of experiencing a change in your health. A score over 300 indicates a "serious" problem and a 70% chance you will experience physical or psychological symptoms within the next two years.

Holmes was able to show that in a sample of 88 young doctors, those who totaled 300 or more had a 70% chance of suffering ulcers, psychological disturbances, broken bones, or other health problems within two years of the various crises. The scale has proven to be and effective prognosticator. By tallying up the life stress of healthy college football players, Holmes and Rahe were even able to predict which ones would be injured during the next season.

Stress Test

The Social Readjustment Rating Scale developed by Holmes and Rahe is copyrighted and cannot be included in this package.

Instructor Notes

After students have completed the Empathy Scale and the Stress Test, allow an open discussion on perceptions and empathy from a supervisor's standpoint.

Suggested Discussion Questions:

1. Why are perceptions important to a supervisor? *Perceptions can be good and bad for a supervisor. A supervisor must use perceptions when hiring a new employee, to be able to make good selections for the company's workforce. However, a supervisor must keep perceptions in check, so as not to inaccurately judge an employee they don't know very well.*

2. Why must a supervisor use empathy not just sympathy? *A supervisor must be able to put themselves into their employee's shoes. Having sympathy for an employee is good, but if the supervisor cannot truly understand how that employee feels, then the supervisor may never be able to resolve issues with that employee.*

3. What was your rating on the stress test? Can you imagine what the ratings were for each of your employees?

Becoming a Better Communicator

Since there are 3 steps in the communication process (Sender - Message - Receiver), then it makes sense that there are 3 areas to study to become a better communicator: Speaking, Organizing Information, and Listening.

Because we begin life by listening before learning how to speak, let's also study the communication process the same way.

How to Become a Better Listener

Review the 4 main parts of the listening process:

1. Hearing -- the physical process of listening
2. Attending -- focusing on what is being said
3. Understanding -- interpreting the message into one's own experiences
4. Remembering -- recalling the message at a later time

These 4 parts represent the process of listening; however, there are ways to help this process by becoming an **active listener**. Look again at the 4 main parts of listening, but now look at the behaviors of an active listener listed below:

1. Hearing --
   - A. The active listener places herself in a location where she will be certain to hear the speaker; or, if possible, moves to a quieter room.
   - B. The active listener attempts to eliminate outside distractions. For example, she closes a door to shut out the kitchen noise, or turns off the radio when talking on the telephone.

2. Attending --
   - A. The active listener makes an effort to concentrate on the speaker's words. For example, she does not otherwise occupy herself while the speaker is talking
   - B. The active listener looks for main points of the presentation; she listens for key words such as first, next, therefore, finally, in conclusion, to identify the main points
   - C. The active listener listens to the entire speech before forming her opinion

3. Understanding --
   - A. The active listener asks questions at the end of the speech to interpret information

B. The active listener paraphrases the speaker's message for clarification; in other words, she repeats the message back to the speaker in her own words to make certain she has the information correct

4. Remembering --
   A. The active listener takes notes and reviews the information to make certain she will be able to use it or repeat it later

Organizing the Message

Before becoming a speaker or a sender of a message, it is important to know what you are going say, so that it will not only make sense to you, but also to your receiver. Here is an example of a message and how to organize the message:

Message: Communicate to a friend how to get to Pridecraft.

Step 1: Consider the audience or the receiver. In this case, where will you're friend be coming from? Does she live around the Enterprise area, or does she live in Wisconsin?

Step 2: Use the proper resources. If your friend will be traveling from Wisconsin, then you will probably need to consult a map; however, let's say she is from the area and will already be familiar with local landmarks. You may not always need to use a resource, but be sure to confirm this before delivering the message.

Step 3: Place the information you wish to deliver into a logical order. In this case, start your message by beginning the directions at your friend's house, give her landmarks in-between, and end at Pridecraft. This is a relatively simple example, but always make notes if necessary to be sure to deliver the message correctly.

Step 4: Preview the message to the receiver. You are now ready to call your friend and give her directions. Always tell or "preview" the message to the receiver so she will know what you're talking about.

Step 5: Present the information in order. An unorganized presentation only serves to confuse the receiver. For example, if you gave your friend directions by skipping all over Enterprise, then she will probably be unable to locate Pridecraft.

Step 6: Summarize the main points. In this case, by reviewing landmarks with your friend, you strengthen her understanding and her ability to remember the information when she comes to visit you at Pridecraft.

Step 7: Allow time for feedback. Take time to answer questions or to allow the receiver to paraphrase your message. For example, by having your friend paraphrase your directions, you will be able to make sure she understands how to get to Pridecraft.

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How to Become a Better Speaker

Although speaking or sending always seems to be the first part in the communication process, in many ways it is the end. For example, if we are preparing to speak on a topic, we will probably want to listen to other's views on the topic, organize our own information on the topic, and then finally, speak on the topic.

Review of the 4 aspects of speaking:

1. Vocal -- the speaker's actual voice
2. Technical -- aides used to help project the speaker's voice; also background noise
3. Topic -- the subject that the speaker will present
4. Delivery -- the actual sending and presentation of the message

As opposed to listening, it is probably easier to see speaking as an active process; however, being active and being actively involved with the audience are two different things. For example, Rena Tarbet is a very active and energetic speaker in the cosmetics industry, but no matter how active she is, she would probably not be very actively involved speaking to an audience of automotive mechanics. Look at the following examples of how to be an involved speaker:

1. Vocal --
   A. An involved speaker makes certain his voice will reach his entire audience
   B. An involved speaker makes sure to reschedule his presentation if he is ill and unable to speak
   C. An involved speaker makes sure he has water nearby if needed

2. Technical --
   A. If an audio system is needed, an involved speaker makes certain all of his equipment is hooked up and functioning properly
   B. An involved speaker makes every attempt to eliminate background noise

3. Topic --
   A. An involved speaker makes sure his topic is suitable to his audience
   B. An involved speaker researches and organizes his topic before presentation

4. Delivery --
   A. An involved speaker makes appropriate eye contact with his audience
   B. An involved speaker uses acceptable hand gestures to accent points
   C. An involved speaker uses visual aides when appropriate
   D. An involved speaker chooses an appropriate length for his presentation in consideration of his audience

Tangoes

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1642 Bush Street
San Franciso, CA 94109-5308
(415) 931-8200

Drawing Activity

Create drawing that contains different geometric shapes.

Directions: This activity is to be conducted in two parts.

Part I

Have students break up into teams of two. If there is an uneven number of students, allow one student to either be a monitor or partner with the instructor. Give one team member on each team a drawing, which the other team member is not allowed to see. Have the students sit back to back, so that they must truly communicate, not demonstrate. Students should not only be concerned with the accuracy of the drawing, but placement on the page is important as well, just as minor details are important in any job. Upon completion, allow the partners on a team to compare the actual drawing with the student drawing. Go to Part II.

Part II

Interchange the drawings amongst the teams, so that now each team has a different drawing. Allow the partners to switch places, so that the "giver" in the first part is now the "receiver", and the "receiver" in the first part is now the "giver". Again, upon completion, allow students to compare the drawings.

Conclusion

Now that the teams have had an opportunity to compare the drawings, conduct a class discussion and allow each team the opportunity to discuss their communication techniques: if the drawings came out nearly identical, why? If the drawings were drastically different, where did communications break down?

Purpose: The purpose of this exercise is to show students several aspects of communication:

1. To show the need of organized and clear presentation of a message (giving drawing directions with little or no prep. time is difficult)
2. To show the need for feedback and clarification.
3. To show students that the role of a supervisor is often not to demonstrate, but to communicate.

Drawing Activity

Instructor create simple shapes composed of circles, squares, and triangles.

Communication as a Problem Solver

Review: Becoming a Better Communicator

Listening:
1. Hearing
   -- Eliminate outside distractions
   -- Go to a quieter location or move closer to the front of a room
2. Attending
   -- Concentrate on speaker
   -- Look for main points
   -- Waits to form an opinion
3. Understanding
   -- Ask questions for clarification
   -- Assimilate information into own experience
4. Remembering
   -- Take notes

Organizing the Message:
1. Consider the audience or receiver
2. Use proper resources
3. Place information in a logical order
4. Preview the message to the receiver
5. Present information in order
6. Summarize main points
7. Answer questions/Provide feedback

Speaking:
1. Vocal
   -- Project voice
   -- Reschedule if ill
2. Technical
   -- Check audio equipment
   -- Eliminate background noise
3. Topic
   -- Subject suitable to audience
   -- Research and organize topic before presentation
4. Delivery
   -- Make appropriate eye contact
   -- Use acceptable hand gestures
   -- Use visual aids when appropriate
   -- Appropriate length for presentation

As a Problem Solver

Less is More

Insanity may be defined as performing the same task over and over, in exactly the same manner, but expecting to get different results.

For some, communication is that same task, performed over and over, but with the expectation of different results.

More Communication is Not Always Better!

"Talk a problem to death"

-- to talk a problem to death means to go over the same ground again and again without making any headway

"Talking ourselves into a hole"

-- talking ourselves into a hole means making a bad situation worse by pursuing it too far
-- Remember: it's better to keep your mouth shut and let people think you're a fool than to open your mouth and prove it!
-- More and more negative communication merely leads to more and more negative results

No Communication

-- Sometimes no communication is the best course of action: for example, when two people are arguing, it is often better to stop arguing than to say something they may later regret.
-- The no communication tactic is often used by sales people, so that they can "let the product sell itself."

Problem Solving

Communicating to solve problems is typically a group activity. Below is list of different types of groups involving individuals that work together toward a common goal:

- Families
  -- work together to resolve household issues, such as chores, bills, transportation
- Co-workers
  -- work together to resolve work-related issues, such as scheduling, task assignment, customer needs

- Neighbors
  -- work together to resolve neighborhood issues, such as crime, speed limits, sidewalks

Problems involving groups can usually be classified as either internal, which directly involves the members of a group, or external, something which is still a group issue, but does not directly involve group members. For example, family issues are usually classified as internal, since the issues involve each member of the family; however, neighborhood issues are usually external, because they do not involve all of the neighbors directly.

Since problems are typically solved by group communication, there are guidelines, or "norms", which a group should follow to allow communication to run smoothly.

There are three types of norms:

- **Social Norms**, which comprise the relationship of members to each other
- **Procedural Norms**, which outline how the group will operate
- **Task Norms**, which indicate how the problem at hand will be resolved

Role Playing Activity

Supplies: Students and list of scenarios (below)

Directions: This activity is to be conducted in two parts. For **Part I**, have students break up into teams of two. Give one student a scenario and have her play the part of the employee. The other student will play the part of the supervisor, and must use the qualities of a good communicator (listening, perception, empathy, norms) to resolve the issue raised by the employee. Upon completion, redistribute the scenarios and let the students switch places. Tip: cut out each scenario by itself -- this makes it easier to pass them out and redistribute. When all teams have completed the task, discuss communication techniques.

Suggested Discussion Questions (Part I):

1. When you were in the role of the employee, did you feel your problem would <u>really</u> be resolved?
2. When you were in the role of the employee, and you raised the issue, did you suggest a course of action and set a reasonable follow-up meeting?
3. When you were in the role of the supervisor, did you feel you really understood the problem?
4. When you were in the role of the supervisor, did you attempt to interpret the underlying feelings? Do you feel your response rated a level 4.0 on the Empathy Scale? If not, why?
5. When you were in the role of the supervisor, did you set a follow-up date to discuss your resolution with the employee? Would that resolution be realistic to the company?

Scenarios for Part I

1. As a new employee, having only been on the job 5 weeks, you feel you are not making adequate progress towards achieving 100% production. Since you don't get to see your supervisor very often, you have an underlying feeling of abandonment.
2. As an experienced employee, you've been on the job several years. You are good at your job, and consistently produce over 100%. A new employee has been seated behind you and is a constant chatterbox. You don't mind assisting a new employee and answering questions, but the constant chatter is distracting to you, and consequently lowering your production.
3. As a new employee in receiving, one of your duties is to drive the forklifts. You like your job and don't mind driving a forklift, however, you have a terrible fear of heights. You mentioned your fear of heights when you interviewed, which is why you specifically asked to be placed in receiving, not ADC. Recently, your supervisor has asked you to stand on the forklift and perform many tasks which require you to be raised on the forklift to extreme heights.

4. You are an experienced employee and good at your job. You are dependable, and live up to your job responsibilities. You have recently been given a great many new job tasks, which you feel you are handling in an acceptable manner, but you feel you are also barely keeping your head above water. Although you don't mind new duties, you have not been given any additional compensation (a salary increase) for the extra duties. You have an underlying feeling that you are being penalized for being a dependable employee -- that you are taking up the slack for the more unreliable, irresponsible people in your department.

5. You are a relatively new employee, having been on the job for a little over 3 months. Your job depends on information that you must get from the person next to you. The information you receive from your co-worker is consistently filled with errors, which you must take time to correct. You like your co-worker on a personal level, but correcting her errors is eating up your working time. You're not really losing money, because you are doing paperwork, which is not based on production. However, you're concerned with your own job performance, and that your job performance will be affected by taking the additional time to correct someone else's errors. You have an underlying feeling that your job would really not be necessary if your co-worker would pull her weight. So, you are obviously nervous about bringing this to your supervisor -- you don't want to get your co-worker fired, but you don't want your position eliminated either. You must find a tactful way to bring this situation to your supervisor's attention.

6. You are an experienced employee and have been on the job several years. You like your job, and you are well-liked at work and considered a dependable and responsible employee. You know what duties are expected of you, and you perform those duties well; however, you feel recently that although you perform your duties, you have no overall view of your place in the company. You are not sure how your duties contribute to the overall function of the company. You are ambitious, and are uncertain that you have a future with the company. You don't feel like you will be fired, but you have an underlying feeling that you could be easily replaced if your position is not better defined with the company.

7. You are an experienced employee, having been with the company for several years. You see many changes occurring within the company, and are extremely nervous about changes which may occur on your job. You are afraid you will not be able to adapt to new or modified duties, and are afraid you will not get enough time or training to learn a new job task. There has been mention of your department utilizing more computerized equipment, and you are extremely intimidated by computers. You have an underlying feeling that if or when these changes occur, you will just be replaced by a machine, or replaced by a younger person with computer experience.

For Part II, have students divide into two groups. Allow them to use the list of norms from the previous lesson (Attachment 1.10) to resolve a problem as a group. Have students solve the problem of the widget (see attached activity). Upon completion, discuss the group's communication.

Suggested Discussion Questions (Part II):

1. Did your group establish or even write down your goal?
2. Did your group appoint a leader (have someone in charge)?
3. Did your group sit face-to-face for open discussion? (This is often called the roundtable discussion method)
4. Did everyone in your group participate?
5. Did your group experience any conflict?
6. Was the group committed to a singular goal?
7. Did your group have disagreements? Were they dealt with amicably?
8. How did your group decide on the final solution? Was a decision reached simply to "give in" to one member?
9. Was there an agenda for how to carry out the solution?
10. Do you feel your group is 100% committed to the decision? or will there later be negative reactions?

Widget Activity

Read the following directions to the students:

Your group represents the management team of a small company which produces widgets. A widget is a small and fragile object that must be packaged one at a time. Here is the problem that your company is faced with: the production on your packing line has drastically dropped because the packers are standing around reading the newspapers which are used to package the widgets. Your company uses newspaper because it is environmentally conscious, and you are able to get day-old newspapers for free from the local newspaper company. You must resolve this problem though, and somehow speed up production on the packing line. Keep in mind that cost is a consideration because your company is currently able to get their packing material, the newspapers, for free. Work together as the management team to solve this problem.

Instructor Directions:

Students will repeatedly ask, "What is a widget?" Since that is not the point of the exercise, simply keep repeating the phrase that "a widget is a small and fragile object that must be packaged one at a time."

Allow students 7-10 minutes to complete the exercise. List both groups possible solutions, and each groups final decision. Most solutions will involve some type of cost to the company. Below are some common solutions, and possible rejections of the solution:

- Shred the newspapers: time consuming and costly
- Fire the employees: cost of re-training new labor, plus this leaves the company open to the same problem occurring again
- Written or Verbal Reprimands for packers: time consuming for supervisors, additional paperwork
- Incentives for not reading the newspapers: monetary cost for the actual incentives
- Obtain foreign newspapers: possible cost to obtain papers, problem may still exist if packers now decide to learn a foreign language
- Use Styrofoam pieces or plastic: costly, and not environmentally conscious

Explain to students that an actual company that produced widgets did exist, and they actually had this problem. Their solution was to hire blind people to pack the widgets. They did not fire the current employees, but merely transferred some to other departments, and when sighted packers left the company, they replaced them with blind employees.

Closure

Instructor to guide open discussion on communication in the workplace.

Suggested Topics/Questions for Discussion:

1. Refer back to motivational activity, where students were set up for failure by being asked to perform an impossible task. Ask students if they can think of any workplace specific examples where they may have inadvertently set up an employee for failure. For example, they may possibly have asked an employee to perform a task without adequate instruction, by assuming that the employee knew more than they did. And, as "old" employees, we often forget that new people don't know proper procedures or company jargon, and without proper explanation, we set up new employees for failure.

2. Discuss difficulties in communication process. Ask students if they can name any common workplace examples of communication break-down. Discuss any suggestions on resolving the problems.

3. Discuss from a supervisor's stand point their perceptions of current employees and new employees. Use the example of the Employee Profile. Most supervisors are giving "excellent" ratings to all new employees. Is this really their perception? If not, why?

4. Discuss stress levels of all employees, including themselves, and how this stress can affect communication. As supervisors, how can they make communications better, and is there any way they see that they might help to lower theirs and their employee's stress levels?

5. Discuss becoming a better communicator overall, and ask students to name some specific actions they would like to take with their department to facilitate better communications. Possibly make a list of actions, and review the list at the end of the entire training class. See if supervisors have been able to implement the actions listed.

Revised 5/96

College: ESJC____ MSTC____ **WORKFORCE 2000 PARTNERSHIP** **Date**:_____
Course#:_____ **INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN** **Level**:_____

Name:_____**Male**:___**Female**:___**Age**:____**Birthdate**:_____

Street:_____**Social Security#**:_____

City:_____**State**:_____**Zip**:_____**Phone#**:(____)_____

Classification: In-State Student___Out-of-State Student___(State)_____International Student___ (Country)_____

Mark Only One: Civilian____Active duty____Retired Military____Military dependent____

Race: White___Hispanic___Asian___Black___American Indian ____Pacific Islander ____Alaskan Native ___Other(Specify)_____

Marital Status: Single____Married____Separated____Divorced____Widowed____

Number of Children Living with You:_____

Employer:_____**How Long?**_____**Job Title:**_____

How many hours per week do you work this job?_____**Do you have more than one job?**_____

Please rate your ability to perform each of the following activities.(P=Poor, F=Fair, G=Good, E=Excellent):

Read English____ Understand English____ Speak English____ Write English____

Work as part of a team____ Use Math____ Solve problems/use reasoning____

Which of the following are required for your job? (Check all that apply)

Read Instructions_____ Speak English_____ Receive Spoken Instruction in English_____

Write English_____ Use Math____ Solve Problems____ Team work____

What are your vocational goals? Immediate_____Long Range_____

Circle the highest grade you completed: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 GED 13 14 15 16 17 18

Last school attended:_____

What are your educational goals? (Check all that apply)

Improve skills for current job___ Improve skills for changing technology/future jobs____

Improve reading/writing/math___ Improve problem solving/critical thinking___ Improve speaking/listening ___

Improve English(for non-native speakers)___ Pass GED tests___ Other(specify)_____

How would you like to be contacted? Through supervisor___Call at home___Letter___Other_____

WORKFORCE 2000 PARTNERSHIP
Individual Education Plan
Learner's Page

Name of Course: Communication 1 - The Machinery of Management
Date of Course: _____

Name: _____
Employer: _____

GOAL(S)	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	PREVIEW/REVIEW SCORE		EVALUATION COMMENTS
• Improve skills for current job • Improve skills for changing technology future jobs • Improve problem solving/critical thinking	(Preview)	1. Administer Preview	_____	X	
	Initiate action in response to requests from the supervisor, instructor, or customer.	Conduct Weight Distribution Activity			
	Interpret task related communications such as following, clarifying, giving, or providing feedback to oral instructions. Utilize English that is acceptable with supervisors, peers, and clients. Engage in appropriate social interactions with supervisors, peers, and clients. Use appropriate non-verbal communication.	1. Discuss the communication process 2. Discuss the difficulties in the communication process.			

GOAL(S)	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	PREVIEW/REVIEW SCORE	EVALUATION COMMENTS
	Interpret task related communications such as following, clarifying, giving, or providing feedback to oral instructions. Utilize English that is acceptable with supervisors, peers, and clients. Engage in appropriate social interactions with supervisors, peers, and clients.	Discuss methods to use in becoming a better communicator.		
	Utilize English that is acceptable with supervisors, peers, and clients. Engage in appropriate social interactions with supervisors, peers, and clients. Initiate action in response to requests from the supervisors, instructors, or customer.	Conduct Tangoes Exercise		

GOAL(S)	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	PREVIEW/REVIEW SCORE	EVALUATION COMMENTS
	Interpret task related communications such as following, clarifying, giving, or providing feedback to oral instructions. Utilize English that is acceptable with supervisors, peers, and clients. Engage in appropriate social interactions with supervisors, peers, and clients. Organize information into an oral report.	Conduct Drawing Activity		
	Interpret task related communications such as following, clarifying, giving, or providing feedback to oral instructions.	1. Review "Becoming a Better Communicator." 2. Discuss using communication to solve problems.		
	Interpret task related communications such as following, clarifying, giving, or providing feedback to oral instructions.	Conduct Role-Playing Activity		

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Individual Education Plan
Learner's Page

GOAL(S)	INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	PREVIEW/REVIEW SCORE		EVALUATION COMMENTS
	Utilize English that is acceptable with supervisors, peers, and clients. Engage in appropriate social interactions with supervisors, peers, and clients. Organize information into an oral report.				
	Interpret task related communications such as following, clarifying, giving, or providing feedback to oral instructions. Utilize English that is acceptable with supervisors, peers, and clients. Engage in appropriate social interactions with supervisors, peers, and clients.	Discuss communication in the workplace.			
	Conduct questions and answers session	Review questions			
(Closure)		Administer Review	X	____	

Instructor Signature

Employee Signature Date

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WORKFORCE 2000 PARTNERSHIP
CURRICULUM APPROVAL FORM

Please review the attached curriculum. Complete the form. Return form and curriculum to:

Wanda Flowers, Curriculum Specialist
Workforce 2000 Partnership
Enterprise State Junior College
P.O. Box 1300
Enterprise, AL 36331

CURRICULUM MODULE: The Machinery of Management Communication I

DATE RECEIVED: October 24, 1996

1. The lesson is technically correct. ✓ **YES** _____ **NO**
   If no, list your suggestions and corrections below.
   A.
   B.
   C.

2. The lesson teaches the topic addressed. ✓ **YES** _____ **NO**
   If no, please write your comments and suggestions below.
   A.
   B.
   C.

3. The answers to the lesson are correct. ✓ **YES** _____ **NO**
   If no, corrections should be noted below.
   A.
   B.
   C.

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4. The supplementary materials are adequate. ✓ YES _____ NO
If no, list other materials.
A.

B.

C.

5. This lesson is appropriate for public dissemination. ✓ YES _____ NO

6. This lesson may be disseminated with company's name in the lesson heading. ✓ YES _____ NO

7. Other Comments:

Reviewed and edited by:

Reviewed by: KIP ALTSTAETTER
(Name and Job Title)

Industry Partner: PRIDECRAFT

Date: 1/19/97
(This date should be within 10 working days after date received.)

Approved by: Kip Altstaetter

Industry Partner: _____

Date: _____
(This date should be within 10 working days after date received.)

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